



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

THE ARRANGEMENT OF THE WORDS IN THE HEBREW NOMINAL SENTENCE.¹

BY C. ALBRECHT.

All languages distinguish between verbal and nominal sentences, according to the different parts of speech which can form a predicate. The former is a sentence in which the subject is (virtually) a noun and the predicate a finite verb; the latter is a sentence in which the subject, as well as the predicate, are (virtually) nouns. When such virtual nouns, in the position of subject or predicate, are represented by independent sentences, we have a compound sentence. Accordingly, the difference in the kinds of sentences rests on the different parts of speech in the predicate. As nouns can indicate only rest, continuance, fixedness, etc.; and verbs, motion, action, development; so the nominal sentence describes, or gives to the subject, an abiding attribute or condition; and the verbal sentence expresses a movement or the development of an action, or say a condition (in case of neuter verbs).² In reference to the arrangement of the words in the simple nominal sentence, which has not been accurately indicated in any grammar of the Hebrew language, but, on the contrary, often even falsely stated, I have, in comparison with the Arabic and Aramaic, arranged tables which embrace the entire Old Testament.

The result of it is as follows:—In the nominal sentence the chief emphasis rests on the subject, and the chief interest attaches to it as the object which is thought of as being in a position or condition or as provided with an attribute. The regular arrangement of the words in the nominal sentence of all Semitic languages is, therefore, subject-predicate; not regarding, of course, the arrangement of words in poetry, which here, as in most languages, takes more license. In Arabic this rule is more easily recognized, and has therefore, generally speaking, been always rightly understood; but in Hebrew and Aramaic it is

¹ Translated from *Zeitschrift fuer die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*, Hft. 2, 1887, pp. 218-224.

² In this definition of the Semitic nominal sentence, account has not been taken of the exact but unscientific statements of Arabic grammarians, which correspond only in part to the above. Cf. "Ajrumiyyah," ed. Trumpp, München, 1876, vi. § 46 seq.; "Mufaṣṣal," ed. Broch, Christiania, 1859; and on this, "Beiträge zur Erklärung des Mufaṣṣal" von Trumpp, München, 1878, 1884, § 24 seq.; "Ueber den arabischen Satzbau nach dem arab. gramm." von Trumpp, München, 1879, II. These are followed by Caspari-Müller and Gesenius-Kautzsch, while others still treat nominal and verbal sentences together; so Ewald, Uhleman, Winer, Nägelsbach, Müller, "Hebr. Schulgrammatik," §§ 497-504, Eng. translation, § 125 seq., Hollenberg, § 43b. The correct definition Nöldeke gives in his "Syrische Grammatik," § 309 seq.; so also Stade, "Hebr. Gram.," § 381 (cf. § 180a), bases upon it the explanation of formation of the Hebr. verb. In regard to others, everyone who lectures on Hebr. grammar and syntax, gives it, no doubt, as I, for example, heard it from Philippi-Rostock.

more difficult. We will consider in particular the arrangement of words in the Hebrew according to the different parts of speech in the predicate:

A. The predicate is a substantive.

Rule: The arrangement is subject-predicate; e. g., Gen. XIII. 10.

Exceptions:

1. The substantive as predicate *must* precede when there is a special emphasis on it, so as to make it prominent to the eye and to the ear; e. g., Jud. XVIII. 29.

2. The substantive as predicate *may* precede.

a) If the subject is a pronoun. This latter rule, of which we find as yet no trace in Arabic, goes through all other Semitic languages, and that quite naturally, for the person, here assumed as generally known, excites less interest than that which is said of him; e. g., 1 Sam. XV. 29.

b) So as to avoid the harshness (nachklappen) of its following a subject which consists of several words; e. g., Exod. VI. 14, 15.

c) In the case of a question; e. g., 1 Sam. XVI. 4.

The arrangement is freer in poetry, where, on account of chiasm, with special frequency, the predicate precedes in one member and follows in the second or the reverse; e. g., Ps. XLVI. 8, 12.

B. The predicate is an adjective:

Rule: The arrangement is subject-predicate; e. g., Gen. II. 12.¹

Exceptions:

1. The adjective as predicate *must* precede when there is a special emphasis on it. This is especially often the case when the adjective is a comparative; e. g., Gen. III. 6; IV. 13.

2. The adjective as predicate *may* precede:

a) When the subject is a pronoun, cf. A. 2. a.; e. g., Exod. II. 2.

b) So as to avoid harshness (nachklappen) when it would follow a subject consisting of several words; e. g. 2 Kgs. XX. 19.

c) In case of a question; e. g., Num. XIV. 3.

¹ While elsewhere in Arabic the rule for the arrangement of the words (viz., subject-predicate) is strictly carried out in the nominal sentence and exceptions occur only singly in interrogative sentences, when the predicate is to be made especially prominent, when the subject is limited by **إِنَّمَا** or **إِنِّهَا**. Cf. Sura x. 54, 78; ix. 130; v. 60; in this case the arrangement of words in Arabic is exceedingly free and in all probability not original.

The regular arrangement must take place: 1) when the subject is a pronoun, e. g., Sura II. 4; CL. 5; or 2) when the predicate is limited by **إِنَّمَا** or **إِنِّهَا**, e. g., Sura LXVII. 9, 20.

Inverted arrangement must take place: 1) when there is united with the subject a pronoun which refers to something in the predicate, e. g., Sura CIX. 6; 2) when the subject is limited by **إِنَّمَا** or **إِنِّهَا**, e. g., Sura III. 19; xv. 21.

Otherwise the arrangement is without rule, in spite of all the statements of Arabic grammarians (cf., for example, Trumpp, "Mufaṣṣal," § 28, "Ueber den arab. Satzbau," II. 3). The prepositional expression as predicate, is sometimes put after, if no ambiguity is to be feared.

To the arrangement of words in poetry what was said under A. applies; e. g., Ps. XXXIII. 4. There is only to be noted that in the poetic sections of the Old Testament the adjective occurs very often as a comparative in the predicate, and to this circumstance is due the fact that it more frequently precedes. Thus, of the cases in Koheleth, about twenty in all, only II. 17 and XI. 7 are not comparatives.

C. The predicate is a participle. Here also the rules under A. apply; e. g., Gen. I. 2; 2 Sam. XVII. 10; Gen. III. 14; Deut. XXVIII. 4; 2 Sam. X. 3; Ps. CXI. 7.

In Aramaic, on account of the frequent use of the participle instead of the finite verb, the arrangement is practically without rules, cf. Nöldeke, § 309, 324.

D. The predicate is an adverb or adverbial expression.

Rule: The arrangement is subject-predicate; Num. XIV. 43.

Exceptions:

1. The adverb as predicate *must* precede :
 - a) When there is a special emphasis on it; e. g., Gen. XLV. 6, 11; 1 Sam. XX. 18.
 - b) As interrogative adverb; e. g., Gen. IV. 9, XVIII. 9.
2. The adverb as predicate *may* precede :
 - a) When the subject is a pronoun; e. g., Gen. XLIV. 10.
 - b) To avoid harshness (nachklappen) when it would follow a subject consisting of several words; e. g., Num. XIII. 22.
 - c) In a relative sentence, where it appears closely joined by Mäqqēph to the *nota relationis*; e. g., Gen. II. 11.

For the arrangement in poetry, what was said under A. is applicable; e. g., Koh. XII. 11.

E. The predicate is a prepositional expression.

Rule: The arrangement is subject-predicate.

Exceptions:

1. The prepositional expression as predicate *must* precede, when there is a special emphasis on it. This is especially frequent when, by means of a nominal sentence the verb to have, to possess, is paraphrased (there is to him = he has), the prepositional expression being virtually the subject; e. g., Gen. XVIII. 14; XXVI. 20.
2. The prepositional expression as predicate *may* precede :
 - a) When the subject is a pronoun; Gen. XXVI. 24.
 - b) To avoid harshness (nachklappen) when it would follow a subject consisting of several words; e. g., Num. XXXIII. 9; 1 Sam. XXV. 2.
 - c) In case of a question, Gen. XXXI. 14; XXXVIII. 25; but cf. 2 Sam. XVIII. 29, 32.

d) In a relative sentence, when it generally appears joined to the *nota relationis* by means of Māqqēph; Gen. i. 29, 30; vi. 17; xxxiv. 14; Lev. xiv. 40.

For the arrangement in poetry, compare what was said under A., and Ps. xi. 4.

F. The predicate is an infinitive.

Rule: The arrangement is subject-predicate; e. g., Isa. xxx. 7; Jer. xxii. 16.

Exceptions are not found in the Bible.

More frequent than the use of the simple infinitive as predicate in the nominal sentence is the use of the infinitive with ה where we then generally translate: there is; in order to; can; must. Cf. Ewald, § 237c.

G. The predicate is a numeral.

Rule: The arrangement is subject-predicate; e. g., Exod. xvi. 36; xxvi. 2.

Exceptions: The numeral as predicate must precede when there is a special emphasis on it; e. g., Num. xi. 21.

H. The predicate is a pronoun.

Rule: The arrangement is subject-predicate; e. g., Gen. xxvii. 21, 24; Isa. xli. 4. (It was I).

Exceptions: The interrogative pronoun as predicate always precedes; e. g., Gen. xxiv. 65; only two exceptions are found in the Bible, Exod. xvi. 7, 8.

When a sentence has several subjects or several predicates, regularly and commonly, those parts of the sentence which belong together stand also together; e. g., Gen. x. 2, 3; xiii. 13. There are, however, cases where several subjects enclose the predicate or several predicates enclose the subject; especially is this so in poetry; e. g., Amos v. 20; Prov. viii. 18; Ps. cxlvii. 5, 6.

In one case there is no exception to the general rule for the arrangement of words in the nominal sentence, viz., in the so-called circumstantial or conditional clause, even not in poetry; e. g., Gen. xix. 1; Judges iv. 5; Koh. ii. 3.